

otherwise order, no proof is received in evidence after completion of the hearing of the appeal or, in cases submitted on the record, after notification by the Board that the case is ready for decision.

(c) *Weight of the evidence.* The weight to be attached to any evidence of record rests within the sound discretion of the Board. The Board may require any party to submit additional evidence on any matter relevant to the appeal.

6302.18 Discovery-depositions (Rule 18).

(a) *General policy and protective orders.* The parties are encouraged to engage in voluntary discovery procedures. In connection with any deposition or other discovery procedure, the Board may make any order which justice requires to protect a party or person from annoyance, embarrassment, oppression, undue burden or expense. Such orders may include limitations on the scope, method, time and place for discovery, or provisions for protecting the secrecy of confidential information or documents.

(b) *Obtaining a deposition.* After an appeal has been docketed, the parties may voluntarily agree to take, or the Board may, upon application of either party and for good cause shown, order the taking of, testimony of any person by deposition upon oral examination or written interrogatories before any officer authorized to administer oaths at the place of examination, for use as evidence or for purposes of discovery. The application for such order shall specify whether the purpose of the deposition is for discovery or for use as evidence.

(c) *Orders on depositions.* The time, place, and manner of taking depositions are as mutually agreed upon by the parties, or failing such agreement, as ordered by the Board.

(d) *Use of evidence.* No testimony taken by deposition is considered as part of the evidence in the hearing of an appeal unless and until such testimony is offered and received in evidence at the hearing. Testimony by deposition is not ordinarily received in evidence if the deponent is present and can testify at the hearing. However,

any deposition may be used to contradict or impeach the testimony of a witness at the hearing. In cases submitted on the record, the Board, in its discretion, may receive depositions as evidence to supplement the record.

(e) *Expenses.* Each party bears its own expenses associated with discovery, unless, in the discretion of the Board, the expenses are apportioned otherwise.

(f) *Subpoenas.* Where appropriate, any party may request that a subpoena be issued under the provisions of Rule 24.

[52 FR 48631, Dec. 23, 1987, as amended at 53 FR 34106, Sept. 2, 1988]

6302.19 Interrogatories to parties, admission of facts, and inspection of documents (Rule 19).

(a) *Interrogatories to parties.* After an appeal has been filed with the Board, a party may serve on the other party written interrogatories to be answered separately in writing, signed under oath, and returned within 30 days of receipt by the answering party. Within 30 days after service the answering party may object to any interrogatory and the Board determines the extent to which the interrogatory is permitted.

(b) *Admission of facts.* After an appeal has been filed with the Board, a party may serve upon the other party a written request for the admission of specified facts. If the request is to admit the genuineness of any document or the truth of any facts stated in a document, a copy of such document shall be served with the request. Within 30 days after receipt of the request, the party served shall answer each requested admission of facts or file objections thereto in writing. The factual propositions set out in the request are deemed admitted, if the answering party, willfully and without good cause, fails to respond to the request for admissions.

(c) *Production and inspection of documents.* After an appeal has been filed with the Board, a party may serve upon the other party a written request to produce and permit the inspection and copying or photographing of any designated documents, not privileged, regarding any matter which is relevant to the appeal.

(d) Any discovery under this rule shall be subject to the provisions of

Rule 18(a) with respect to general policy and protective orders.

6302.20 Time and place of hearing (Rule 20).

Hearings will be held at such places determined by the Board to best serve the interests of the parties and the Board. Hearings will be scheduled at the discretion of the Board with due consideration to the regular order of appeals, the requirements for accelerated or expedited procedures and other pertinent factors. On request of any party and for good cause, the Board, may, in its discretion, change the date of hearing.

6302.21 Notice of hearing (Rule 21).

The parties are given at least 15 days notice of the time and place set for hearing. In scheduling hearings, the Board gives due regard to the desires of the parties and the requirement for the just and inexpensive determination of appeals without unnecessary delay. Notices of hearings shall be promptly acknowledged by the parties.

6302.22 Unexcused absence of a party (Rule 22).

The unexcused absence of a party at the time and place set for hearing is not an occasion for delay. In the event of such absence, the presiding Administrative Judge may order the hearing to proceed or, in his or her discretion, may invoke the provisions of Rule 36.

6302.23 Nature of hearings (Rule 23).

(a) Hearings are as informal as may be reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances. At the hearing the parties may offer such relevant evidence as they deem appropriate and as would be admissible under the Federal Rules of Evidence, subject, however, to the sound discretion of the presiding Administrative Judge in supervising the extent and manner of presenting the evidence. In general, admissibility is governed by relevancy and materiality. Copies of documents, affidavits, or other evidence not ordinarily admissible under judicial rules or evidence, may be admitted in the discretion of the presiding Administrative Judge. The weight to be attached to evidence presented in any particular form is

within the discretion of the Board, taking into consideration all the circumstances of the particular case. Stipulations of fact agreed upon by the parties may be used as evidence at the hearing. The parties may stipulate the testimony that would be given by a witness if the witness were present. In any case, the Board may require evidence in addition to that offered by the parties.

(b) Witnesses before the Board are examined orally under oath or affirmation, unless the facts are stipulated, or the Board otherwise orders.

6302.24 Subpoenas (Rule 24).

(a) *General.* Every subpoena shall state the name of the Board and the title of the appeal and shall command each person to whom it is directed to attend and give testimony, and, if appropriate, to produce books, papers, documents, or tangible things, at a time and place therein specified. Subpoenas (including those calling for the production of documentary evidence) are signed by an Administrative Judge or by the Recorder of the Board but otherwise left blank when furnished to the party requesting the subpoena. The party to whom the subpoena is issued shall fill it in before service.

(b) *Subpoenas for attendance at hearing.* At the request of any party, subpoenas for the attendance of witnesses at a hearing are issued. A subpoena requiring the attendance of a witness at a hearing may be served at any place within 100 miles of the place of hearing specified in the subpoena; but the Board, upon proper application and for good cause shown by the requesting party, may authorize the service of a subpoena at any other place.

(c) *Subpoenas for production of documentary evidence.* A subpoena, in addition to requiring attendance to testify, may also command any person to whom it is directed to produce books, papers, documents, or tangible things designated therein. A subpoena calling for such production shall show the general relevance and reasonable scope of the evidence sought.

(d) *Subpoenas for taking depositions.* Subpoenas in aid of depositions (including those for the production of books, papers, documents, or tangible